

Edward Farrar Utility District Commissioners Meeting

Monday July 17, 2023
5:00 pm in the Municipal Office

Present in the Municipal Office: P.H. Flanders, L. Sayah, R. Finucane; Commissioners. B. Woodruff, T. Leitz; staff. M. Pomilio (Revitalizing Waterbury) and J. Zimmerman (EFUD loan review team); members of the public.

Chairperson Flanders called the meeting to order at 5 P.M.

Approve Agenda: P.H. Flanders requested to modify the agenda to include an item at the end related to bonuses for staff related to their efforts to assist during the flood. **R. Finucane made a motion to approve the amended agenda; L. Sayah seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.**

Update on flood impact on EFUD staff and infrastructure: B. Woodruff informed he had concerns about the integrity of the lagoons at the sewer plant and that they had utilized a 4” pump that Stowe provided to pump partially treated waste out of the lagoons. The work done to harden the main pump station worked, and that seemed to work normally, although they had trouble getting accurate readings. He also informed that all EFUD staff went far above and beyond to respond to the flood. Everyone in the meeting praised the staff, and noted they worked well as a team.

Consideration of loan for Stowe Street Café: T. Leitz discussed and presented the proposed \$50,000 loan for Stowe Street Café. The loan, as presented, has a 5-year term with a 5% interest rate, the same as what was provided to Stone’s Throw Pizza. While the financials of the Café in isolation were not strong, the owners had other income and their overall financial situation provided reasonable assurance they could service the debt. This loan was largely to refinance an existing loan for the Café, and the repayment of that loan was based on daily sales. That repayment structure made it difficult for the owner to manage their liquidity. **R. Finucane made a motion to approve the loan for the Stowe Street Café based on the terms outlined by the District Manager; L. Sayah seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.**

Consideration of Short-Term Relief for Flood Impacted Businesses: T. Leitz proposed that EFUD approach flood impacted businesses to discuss loans to ease any short-term problems they may face. T. Leitz pointed out that several businesses were expected to be closed for some time, and they had lost inventory. J. Zimmerman and M. Pomilio both expressed their support for the concept. T. Leitz further explained that he envisioned bridge loans at 0%, which would be repaid when businesses receive insurance settlements or FEMA assistance. **R. Finucane made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to approach these businesses with the concept, and to bring formal proposals back to the board; L. Sayah seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.**

Mid-Year Financial Update: T. Leitz presented the mid-year update. For both water and sewer T. Leitz noted that payroll costs were in line with the budgeted amounts, and overall, we were in a surplus position. The planned water main replacement project had not yet begun, so there are no expenses or revenues recorded as yet. T. Leitz informed the board that we have seen increased costs in chemicals, but the most significant increase is for chlorine, which we do not use in large quantities. Overall, the budgets are being executed as planned and there are no major points of concern at this point.

Bonuses for Staff: There was a broad discussion and support to provide staff bonuses related to their work to assist with flood relief. P.H. Flanders shared his desire to not pay any bonuses to EFUD staff until there was time to coordinate with the Town to ensure all staff are treated fairly. T. Leitz noted the Town selectboard had informally expressed support for bonuses, but also noted the EFUD Commissioners are an independent governing body and they do not have to wait for the Town selectboard to take action. There was no formal motion, but the board decided to discuss the matter at a later meeting after P.H. Flanders and the Manager had time to engage with the selectboard. There was also a desire to not take action with only three board members present.

Consider Minutes from 6/14 Meeting: R. Finucane made a motion to approved the minutes from the June 14th meeting, and L. Sayah seconded. All voted in favor.

R. Finucane made a motion, seconded by L. Sayah to adjourn the meeting at 7 p.m. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned.

The next meeting of the Edward Farrar Utility District is scheduled for Wednesday August 9th, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.